

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 978

By Harper

A RESOLUTION to honor James Shaw, Jr., for his heroism.

WHEREAS, the history of Tennessee is teeming with heroes, from those who courageously served in combat to those whose humanitarian acts made possible a brighter future, but the story of one particular everyday hero is especially moving and inspiring; and

WHEREAS, his modest protestations to the contrary, James Shaw, Jr., of Nashville is most decidedly a hero; and

WHEREAS, in the early morning of April 22, 2018, an assailant armed with a semi-automatic rifle opened fire on the patrons and employees of the Waffle House restaurant located in the Antioch community of Metropolitan Nashville; and

WHEREAS, this heinous, cowardly act resulted in the deaths of four people and injuries to several others, including two people seriously injured by gunshot, but the aftermath would surely have been much greater if not for the heroic actions of James Shaw, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shaw and his friend had been present at the Waffle House only a few minutes when the attack began; quickly realizing that there was no place for him or anyone else to hide, Mr. Shaw sprang into action and thus saved many lives; and

WHEREAS, showing no concern for his personal safety, James Shaw, Jr., rushed the assailant and grabbed the gun's barrel; after wresting the firearm from the assailant's control, he flung it over the counter, removing the possibility of the gun being used to do even more harm; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shaw then pushed the assailant out the front door, and after a brief tussle, the gunman fled the scene on foot; Mr. Shaw suffered a gunshot wound and burns from grasping the gun's barrel during the melee; and

WHEREAS, if his heroism is equaled by anything, it is Mr. Shaw's penchant for honesty; he later asserted that his actions were purely selfish and that he was only trying to stay alive, but everyone else, from Mayor David Briley, to Police Chief Steve Anderson, to Nashvillians from all walks of life, disagrees; and

WHEREAS, no matter his motivations, Mr. Shaw is indeed a hero; his actions on that fateful morning are unfathomable to most, indescribable by even the chief of police, and very poignant to the citizens of Nashville, who are deeply grateful for his brave actions in the face of extreme adversity that saved many lives; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shaw first felt the enormity of the situation and his actions when asked about his four-year-old daughter, Brooklyn, who is always first on his mind; and

WHEREAS, later that morning, Mr. Shaw attended church to thank God for delivering him from evil and giving him the strength to do what was necessary during the chaos; and

WHEREAS, in a gesture that speaks volumes about his humanity, James Shaw, Jr., has started a GoFundMe page to benefit the families of the victims of the Waffle House attack; and

WHEREAS, a native of Nashville, James Shaw, Jr., is a graduate of Hunters Lane High School, attended Tennessee State University, and studied at Brightwood College to obtain his degree as an electrician technician, following in the footsteps of his father, who is also an electrician; and

WHEREAS, if a hero is "a person noted for courageous acts or nobility of character," then James Shaw, Jr., is a hero twice over, for he has demonstrated both his courage and character in a manner few could ever attempt to emulate; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend James Shaw, Jr., for his heroic actions on the morning of April 22, 2018, that saved the lives of many of his fellow Nashvillians and extend to him our best wishes for success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.